

**Washington, DC** – Congressman Sanford D. Bishop, Jr. (GA-02) today announced today that an additional \$500,000 in financial assistance has been approved for the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP) in the Lower Flint River Basin project.

“This funding for AWEP couldn’t have come at a better time,” said Congressman Bishop. “These additional funds will prove to be essential to the widespread adoption of these water-saving technologies. Our producers are good stewards of the land; these funds will help them implement more water conservation at a faster rate.”

During his recent visit to Albany to join Congressman Bishop in announcing the additional funding of \$70,000, the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service – Dave White had an opportunity to also visit a variable rate irrigation project and was impressed with the potential for increased water savings and the high interest and demand for the program. As a result of his on-site visit, an additional \$500,000 was made available to fund applications this year. The program was initially funded at \$1 million; then, the additional \$70,000 was made available in August of this year. Now an additional \$500,000 is available for a total of \$1,570,000.

“This project will improve water efficiency by deploying advanced irrigation management practices across 27 counties in Southwest Georgia,” said Congressman Bishop. “Funded practices include low pressure drop nozzle irrigation retrofits with end gun shut-offs, remote soil moisture monitoring, sod based rotation, and variable rate irrigation.”

The AWEP promotes ground and surface water conservation and improves water quality by helping farmers and ranchers implement agricultural water enhancement activities. These include:

- Water quality or water conservation plan development, including resource condition assessment and modeling;
- Water conservation restoration or enhancement projects, including conversion to the production of less water-intensive agricultural commodities or dry land farming;
- Water quality or quantity restoration or enhancement projects;
- Irrigation system improvement or irrigation efficiency enhancement;
- Activities designed to mitigate the effects of drought; and
- Other related activities to help achieve water quality or water conservation benefits on agricultural land.

## USDA-NRCS to Provide Lower Flint River Basin with Additional \$500,000

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More information about specific AWEPP projects visit: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov> , or visit the nearest USDA Service Center in your area.

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